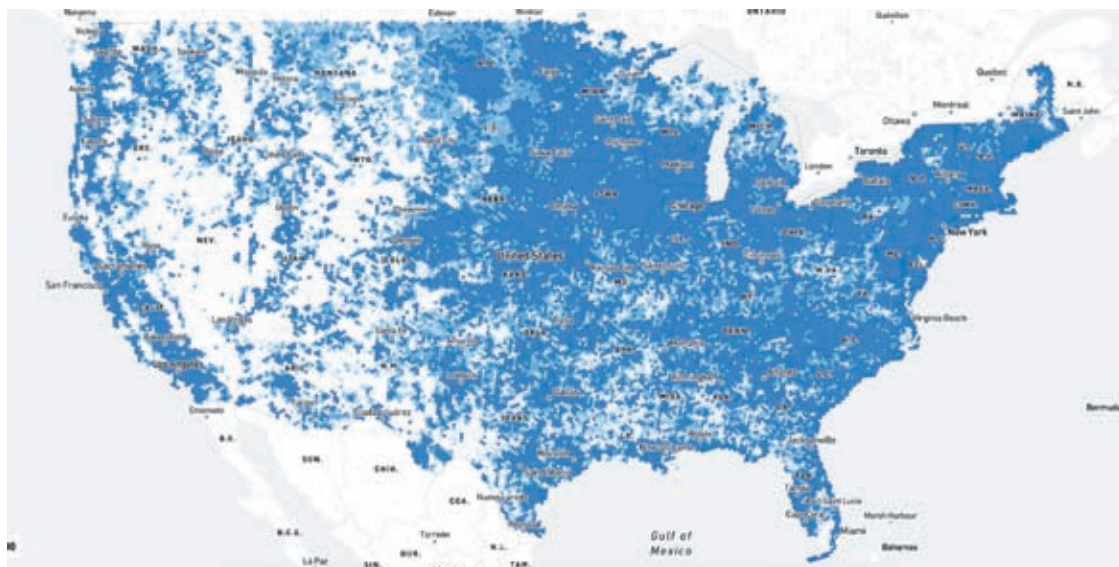




States contend with short timeline to correct broadband map



This computer screen provided by the FCC shows a draft of the Federal Communications Commission's new broadband map, a future version of which will determine how much of a \$42.5 billion federal investment in high-speed internet each state gets. The darker the blue, the better the broadband coverage.

Associated Press

By KAVISH HARJAI

Associated Press/Report for America

LOS ANGELES (AP) — States are racing against a deadline to challenge the map federal officials will use to divvy up the nation's largest-ever investment in high-speed internet. At stake is a share of the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment program, part of the infrastructure measure President Joe Biden signed into law last year.

States have until Jan. 13 to challenge a broadband speed map the Federal Communications Commission released last month that, for the first time, illustrates the haves and have nots of internet access down to specific street addresses.

Critics have long suspected that the number of people with internet connections has been overstated by the government, in part because agencies creating the maps have deferred to telecommunications companies to say where service is provided. Extending service to remote areas with few customers can be expensive for internet providers, but using the surge

of new federal funds to fill the gaps depends heavily on knowing where they are. West Virginia officials have already submitted challenges for 138,000 underserved homes, businesses and other locations in the state that they say are missing, and they're preparing at least 40,000 more.

"We're going to find out," said U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, a West Virginia Democrat. "There is no excuse that West Virginia — every nook and cranny, every person — if they've got electricity in their house, by God they can get internet in their house, too." According to the first draft of this year's FCC map, 2% of residential addresses in the U.S. have no broadband access at all and 11% are considered underserved. But those figures are likely to rise after the state challenges. Previous FCC maps depicted broadband availability at the census block level. That meant that if an internet service provider reported that it offered broadband to one home within a census block, the whole census block would be considered served.

Continued on Page 2

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SMFA signed new lease agreement for the ex-Botica Aruba monument



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States contend with short timeline to correct broadband map

Continued from Front

But Congress in 2020 tasked the FCC with creating a more precise broadband map. It hired a company called CostQuest, which tapped tax assessment and land use records, as well as census and geo-spatial data, to create the underlying layer of the map showing every address where broadband can be installed. Then, internet service providers reported what internet speeds they actually offer at each address.

To counter expected discrepancies, the public can challenge the map — an option that wasn't available with the FCC's census block-level maps.

"I like to refer to (the new FCC map) as census block-penetrating radar," said Jim Stritzinger, the director of South Carolina's broadband office, which reported 33,000 state addresses missing from the map.

Mississippi's state broadband director, Sally Doty, said her office found a "tremendous amount" of addresses missing in high-growth areas of the state, including DeSoto and Madison counties and along the Gulf Coast. The state launched a website at the end of November where residents can run speed tests and fill out a survey about their internet service. "If we have low speeds for an area that is reported as covered, it will allow us to investigate that further and



Jade Piros de Carvalho, director of the Office of Broadband Development in the Kansas Department of Commerce, talks about the need for broadband internet service across the state with a map of state grants for projects, Wednesday Dec. 13, 2022, in the department's offices in Topeka, Kansas. Associated Press

determine the appropriate action," Doty said, adding that she hopes to get 100,000 unique responses through the website before the end of the year.

Maine's state broadband office sent engineers to some 2,500 addresses across populated areas where it predicted broadband technology was likely to be misreported. Over the course of two weeks, the engineers identified approximately 1,000 discrepancies between the information on the FCC map and what actually exists in the state, Meghan Grabill, a data analyst working on the project, said. The state is combining its results from the field analysis with data

from internet providers, the postal service and emergency dispatchers to identify other discrepancies.

While some states are pouring millions of dollars into the challenge process, others say they lack the resources to fully participate. Kansas' state broadband office recently hired two new staff members, boosting the total number to just four. Rather than collect data in bulk, the state has focused its efforts on webinars and public outreach to train residents how to challenge the map themselves.

"We're walking them step by step through it," said Jade Piros de Carvalho, Kansas' broadband direc-

tor.

Challenges to the map can include assertions that locations are missing or that the internet service depicted on the map isn't actually available. The challenges can be done in bulk, by state or local governments, or at an individual level, where residents confirm the information for just their address.

The mapping system West Virginia is using to fact check the FCC map was created to provide city-style addresses for large rural areas of the state in order to help emergency services workers respond to 911 calls and other emergencies.

"These maps have been a

challenge, and that's putting it nicely, for years," said Kelly Workman, director of West Virginia's Office of Broadband, said of the FCC's maps. "Everyone in West Virginia has known for a long time that these maps are not serving our state well."

The Jan. 13 deadline was set so that the FCC can resolve challenges before the National Telecommunications and Information Administration announces states' allotments in June 2023.

The states will in turn funnel the grant money to several entities, including internet service providers, local or tribal governments and electric co-ops, to expand networks where people don't have good service. Entities that take this money will have to offer a low-cost service option. Government regulators will approve the price of that service.

Each state will receive a minimum of \$100 million and final allocations will be based upon several factors, including an analysis of unserved locations as shown on the FCC map.

Unserved locations are those without reliable service of at least 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload. Officials in some states, including Texas and Vermont, have pressed for the deadline to be extended, but the FCC has given no indication it will move back the Jan. 13 date. □



FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried, center, is escorted from a Corrections Department van as he arrives at the Magistrate Court building for a hearing, in Nassau, Bahamas, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

By KEN SWEET
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Sam Bankman-Fried told a Ba-

hamian court Wednesday that he has agreed to be extradited to the U.S. to face criminal charges relat-

FTX founder agrees to extradition, expected to fly to U.S.

ed to the collapse of cryptocurrency exchange FTX. The former FTX CEO appeared at a Magistrate's Court and is expected to head to Odyssey Aviation to return to the United States, according to Bahamian news organization Our News.

Bahamian authorities arrested Bankman-Fried last week at the request of the U.S. government. U.S. prosecutors allege he played

a central role in the rapid collapse of FTX and hid its problems from the public and investors. The Securities and Exchange Commission said Bankman-Fried illegally used investors' money to buy real estate on behalf of himself and his family.

The 30-year-old could potentially spend the rest of his life in jail.

Bankman-Fried was denied bail Friday after a Bahamian judge ruled that

he posed a flight risk. The founder and former CEO of FTX, once worth tens of billions of dollars on paper, is being held in the Bahamas' Fox Hill prison, which has been cited by human rights activists as having poor sanitation and as being infested with rats and insects.

Once he's back in the U.S., Bankman-Fried's attorney will be able to request that he be released on bail. □

Pageantry evoking Churchill greets Zelenskyy in Washington

By CHRIS MEGERIAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At a time of grave consequence, a wartime leader crossed the Atlantic to arrive at a White House decked in holiday decor to consult with the American president about a war in Europe.

The moment was Dec. 22, 1941, as British Prime Minister Winston Churchill landed near Washington to meet with President Franklin D. Roosevelt just weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Almost 81 years later to the day, the pageantry of that trip was echoed on Wednesday as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy touched down at Joint Base Andrews just outside the capital for a surprise visit with President Joe Biden and an address to Congress.

Zelenskyy arrived in Washington as a changed leader since he last visited the White House more than a year ago, when Russia's bloody invasion of Ukraine was still in history's horizon. The former comedian was somber, even grim, in a black suit as he



President Joe Biden meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the Oval Office of the White House, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

spoke about threats to his country's security. Now, he evokes comparisons to Churchill for his fierce defense of a country facing an existential crisis.

His heightened stature on the world stage was reflected as soon as he entered the White House grounds, where he was greeted by a color guard

lining the driveway. On a brisk winter day, Zelenskyy, dressed in his trademark army green fatigues, was greeted by Biden and first lady Jill Biden. Together, they posed for pictures before ducking into the building. The two presidents walked to the Oval Office, where they sat in armchairs in front of a roaring fire. A

portrait of Roosevelt hung above the mantle, which was draped with a Christmas garland.

Biden told Zelenskyy that the Ukrainian people "inspire the world" and said that "you are the man of the year in the United States of America," referencing Zelenskyy's recognition from Time magazine.

Zelenskyy, speaking in English, thanked Biden with "all my heart" for the American support.

He presented Biden with a medal that had been awarded to the Ukrainian captain of a HIMARS battery, a rocket system provided by the U.S.

"He's very brave, and he said, give it to a very brave president," Zelenskyy said.

Biden called the gift "undeserved but much appreciated." A senior administration official said Biden and Zelenskyy discussed the possibility of a visit to Washington during a phone call on Dec. 11. The official, who discussed planning for the trip on condition of anonymity, said the invitation was formally extended on Dec. 14.

Zelenskyy traveled under American protection. He was accompanied by the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine on a train to Poland and then he was whisked to a U.S. government plane for the flight to Washington.

Security was tightened around the White House, with pedestrians barred from Pennsylvania Avenue. □

As flu rages, U.S. releases medicine from national stockpile

By AMANDA SEITZ

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration said Wednesday it will release doses of prescription flu medicine from the Strategic National Stockpile to

states as flu-sickened patients continue to flock to hospitals and doctors' offices around the country.

This year's flu season has hit hard and early. Some people are even noticing bare shelves at pharmacies

and grocery stores when they make a run for over-the-counter medicines as cases have spiked. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the flu has resulted in 150,000 hospitalizations and 9,300 deaths so far this season.

"Jurisdictions will be able to get the support they need to keep Americans healthy as flu cases rise this winter," Dawn O'Connell, an assistant secretary for preparedness and response at the Health and Human Services Department, which oversees the CDC, said in a statement.

States will be able to request doses of the prescription flu medication Tamiflu kept in the Strategic National Stockpile from HHS. The administration is not

releasing how many doses will be made available. Antiviral medications were released from the stockpile more than a decade ago during the H1N1, also known as swine flu, pandemic.

Last week, the federal agency also announced it would allow states to dip into statewide stockpiles for Tamiflu, making millions of treatment courses available. Tamiflu can be prescribed to treat flu in people over the age of 2 weeks old.

This flu season is coming on the heels of a nasty spike of RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, cases in children and just as COVID-19 cases are climbing again.

Spot shortages of over-the-counter pain relievers and medicines have been

reported at stores around the country, particularly for children. HHS said it is working with states to keep in-demand medicines stocked, and drug makers like Johnson & Johnson report production lines are running around the clock.

CVS Health, for example, has placed a two-product limit on all children's pain relief products bought through its pharmacies or online. Walgreens is limiting customers online to six purchases of children's over-the-counter fever reducing products.

The Food and Drug Administration has not reported a shortage of Tamiflu. However, the federal agency says the prescription antibiotic amoxicillin is in short supply due to increased demand. □



A flu vaccine is readied at the L.A. Care and Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plans' Community Resource Center, Oct. 28, 2022, in Lynwood, Calif.

Associated Press

Baltimore homicides stubbornly high despite new initiatives

By LEA SKENE

Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Jalil George was checking on his Baltimore investment property earlier this month when a gunman mistook him for someone else and opened fire. The young real estate investor and recent college graduate spent his final moments outside a partially renovated brick rowhouse that symbolized his positive vision for the future of Baltimore, loved ones said.

Police called the afternoon homicide an apparent case of mistaken identity. They believe George was targeted because of his car; a similar model was involved in an earlier shooting nearby.

In the 24 hours surrounding his death, three other men were fatally shot within a roughly 1-mile (1.6-kilometer) radius in the Park Heights area of northwest Baltimore.

The recent spate of killings has reignited longstanding frustration and familiar debate amid another year of rampant gun violence. The city's homicide count surpassed 300 for the eighth year running as violence remains stubbornly high despite repeated promises from city officials and new



Tammy Chance, left, mother of Jalil George, 24, who was killed Dec. 7, 2022 in Baltimore, stands with George's stepfather, Shawn Chance, center, and George's grandmother Susie Squire, during a vigil for George on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022, in Baltimore.

Associated Press

anti-violence initiatives.

"Baltimore City done become a graveyard — memorials on every corner," said longtime Park Heights resident Karl McDonald, who joined a recent anti-violence march in the neighborhood.

Though they expressed a collective commitment to saving lives, community members presented a spectrum of ideas about

how to address the intractable problem. Some say citizens should help spark cultural change, while others criticize elected leaders for repeatedly failing to quell the violence, which remains heavily concentrated in neighborhoods most affected by poverty, racism and prolonged disinvestment.

"The city has allowed this to happen for so long, but

it's the city's responsibility to keep our citizens safe," said Imhotep Fatiu, founder of the Pan-Afrikan Liberation Movement, which focuses on strengthening Baltimore's Black community. "We need to put pressure on the government."

A longtime fixture in Park Heights, Fatiu said little has changed since he got shot there in 1989. He questioned how city officials

would react if the violence was occurring in whiter, more affluent communities. "Look at this neighborhood," he said, gesturing toward swaths of vacant row houses and overgrown lots. "It wouldn't take much investment to make a difference."

Others called on their peers to assume a more active role in anti-violence efforts. "We want to spectate, but now is the time for participation," local activist Elijah Miles told dozens of mourners at a rally honoring George. "If you really care about what's happening in these streets, get out and work in them. Because our people are dying, each and every day."

At another recent demonstration in Park Heights, about 50 people marched through the streets chanting into a megaphone: "One life is one too many."

A sprawling community that encompasses about a dozen neighborhoods in northwest Baltimore, Park Heights once boasted a thriving economy and picturesque tree-lined streets surrounding the historic Pimlico Race Course. But white flight and other factors led to increased rates of poverty, violence and economic decline. □

New York to open first legal pot dispensary by year's end

NEW YORK (AP) — The first legal dispensary for recreational marijuana in New York is set to open Dec. 29, marking a long-awaited launch of a cannabis industry that could become one of the country's most lucrative.

Gov. Kathy Hochul announced Wednesday that Housing Works, a minority-controlled nonprofit in Manhattan that serves people with HIV and AIDS, will be the first of 36 recently licensed dispensaries to begin selling cannabis to the general public even though dozens of illegal shops have been in operation for many months.

The announcement was made one month after the state's Cannabis Control Board took a monumental step in establishing a legal marketplace for marijuana



Marijuana plants for the adult recreational market are seen hanging in a drying room at a farm in Suffolk County, N.Y., Oct. 4, 2022.

Associated Press

by issuing the first round of licenses. In the coming months, the state is expected to issue an additional 139 licenses, with about 900 applicants waiting to learn their fate.

"The industry will continue to grow from here, creating inclusive opportunity in every corner of New York State with revenues directed to our schools and revitalizing communities," Hochul said in her announcement.

New York legalized recreational use of marijuana in March 2021.

Housing Works, which also serves homeless and formerly incarcerated people,

was one of eight nonprofits among the initial licensees. "This opportunity will not only give our team the resources to further our overall mission, but to feature and elevate products coming from LGBTQ+, BIPOC and women-led cannabis brands across the state," said Charles King, chief executive officer of Housing Works.

The state reserved its first round of retail licenses for applicants with marijuana convictions or their relatives, plus some nonprofit groups. It also planned a \$200 million public-private fund to aid "social equity" applicants. □

Kremlin warning: More U.S. arms to Ukraine will aggravate war

By E. EDUARDO CASTILLO
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The Kremlin warned Wednesday that increasing the supply of U.S. arms to Ukraine would aggravate the devastating 10-month war ignited by Russia's invasion, and Russia's defense minister called for expanding Moscow's military by at least 500,000 people. Speaking during a meeting with his top military brass, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow would take lessons learned in the conflict to "develop our armed forces and strengthen the capability of our troops." He said special emphasis would go to developing nuclear forces, which he described as "the main guarantee of Russia's sovereignty."

The bullish rhetoric from Moscow came as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy prepared to meet with President Joe Biden in Washington, where U.S. officials announced a huge new military aid package for Kyiv.

Putin also said the Russian military's new Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile will enter service shortly. The Sarmat is intended to replace aging Soviet-built ballistic missiles and form the core of Russia's nuclear forces. Putin has hailed its capacity to dodge missile defenses.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said the beefed-up Russian military will include 695,000 volunteer contract soldiers, 521,000 of whom should be recruited by the end of 2023. The Russian military had about 400,000 contract soldiers as part of its 1-million-member military before the fighting in Ukraine began.

All Russian men ages 18 to 27 are obliged to serve in the military for one year, but many use college deferments and health exemptions to avoid the draft. Shoigu said the draft age range will be changed to 21 to 30, and the recruits will be offered a choice between serving for one



Russian President Vladimir Putin takes part in the launch ceremony of The Kovykta gas condensate field via videoconference in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

year as draftees or signing a contract with the military as volunteers.

He also said Russia would form new units in the country's west in view of ambitions by Finland and Sweden to join NATO.

The Kremlin's plans marked a return to the Soviet-era military structure, which Russia abandoned during recent reforms that saw the creation of smaller units. Some Russian military experts have argued that the more compact units intended for use in local conflicts were undermanned and underequipped for a massive conflict like the action in Ukraine.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the expansion of Western weapon supplies to Ukraine "leads to an aggravation of the conflict and, in fact, does not bode well for Ukraine."

Peskov's comments were the first official Russian reaction to news that Zelenskyy was heading to Washington in his first known foreign trip since Russia's Feb. 24 invasion triggered a war that has killed thousands and laid waste to towns and cities across Ukraine.

The White House announcement of the military aid for Ukraine came just hours before Zelenskyy was expected to arrive. The

massive \$1.8 billion package includes for the first time a Patriot missile battery and precision guided bombs for fighter jets, U.S. officials said.

Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Kyiv-based Penta Center independent think tank, said Zelenskyy's visit could help map out future strategy.

"This is indeed a very significant and symbolic visit," Fesenko told The Associated Press. "Zelenskyy for the first time dared to leave Ukraine and is counting on being able to maintain, and possibly even strengthen, U.S. military and economic assistance to Ukraine."

Moscow also was involved in high-level diplomacy. The deputy head of Russia's Security Council, Dmitry Medvedev, met Wednesday with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Medvedev, a former Russian president, said in a video statement that he and Xi discussed an array of topics, including "the conflict in Ukraine." Medvedev did not elaborate. China has refused to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and criticized sanctions against Moscow. Beijing has only referred to the invasion as the "Ukraine situation" in deference to Moscow, and accused the U.S. and NATO of provok-

ing Putin by expanding into eastern Europe.

In Ukraine, Russian forces pounded populated areas with more missiles and artillery Wednesday. They shelled areas around the city of Nikopol in Ukraine's southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region overnight, its governor, Valentyn Reznichenko, said on Telegram on Wednesday morning. Nikopol is located across the Dnieper River from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Russian forces currently occupy the plant, Europe's largest nuclear power station.

The Ukrainian president's office reported Wednesday that Russian attacks on Tuesday killed five civilians and wounded 17. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said Russia unleashed five missiles and 16 airstrikes on Ukrainian territory and 61 attacks from multiple-launch rocket systems.

General Staff spokesperson Oleksandr Shtupun said Ukrainian forces repelled attacks around more than 25 populated areas in eastern Ukraine's Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk provinces, with the cities of Bakhmut and Avdiivka continuing to be key targets of Russia's grinding offensive. □

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Scotland's move to simplify gender change stirs strong views

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A plan by Scotland's government to make it easier for people to change gender for legal purposes has sparked acrimonious debate, with lawmakers arguing inside the Edinburgh parliament and rival groups of protesters demonstrating outside.

A bill introduced by the Scottish National Party-led government would allow people to transition by self-declaration, removing the need for a medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria. The government says it a simple step that will improve the lives of transgender people by allowing them to get official documents that correspond with their gender identity.

Opponents, including "Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling, claim the simplified procedure risks allowing predatory men to gain access to spaces intended for women, such as shelters for domestic abuse survivors. The Scottish parliament is set to resume debating the bill Wednesday after a session the previous day lasted until midnight. A final vote is



A member of the Scottish Family Party, left speaks with a supporter of the Gender Recognition Reform Bill (Scotland) during a protest outside the Scottish Parliament, ahead of a debate on the bill, in Edinburgh, Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2022.

scheduled, though multiple amendments mean it may be delayed.

Tuesday's debate descended into acrimony, with spectators shouting "Shame on you" after lawmakers defeated an amendment that aimed to prevent convicted sex offenders from obtaining a gender recognition certificate.

Legislators also defeated an amendment that would have set the minimum age for gender transition at 18 rather than 16.

Supporters of transgender rights demonstrated outside the parliament building in Edinburgh to urge lawmakers to support the bill. One of them, Beth Douglas, said the bill under debate would allow people to

have birth certificates and eventually their death certificates that match their gender identity.

"There will be a day for everyone when we are issued a death certificate," said Douglas, who runs an LGBT+ group. "When that happens for me, I want that death certificate to be in the right gender. I would like to rest in peace and die

in dignity."

At a separate demonstration by opponents, Rowling's husband read out a message from the author, in which she branded the bill "the single biggest roll-back of women's rights in our lifetimes."

The bill is likely to pass, though it is opposed by the opposition Conservatives and by some in the governing SNP.

Joanna Cherry, an SNP lawmaker in the U.K. Parliament, said the law "gives any man the right to self-identify as a woman after three months of living as a woman ... with minimal safeguards."

The law will set Scotland apart from the rest of the United Kingdom, where a gender dysphoria diagnosis is needed before individuals can have the gender designation on their identity documents changed.

Under the Scottish legislation, trans people would be allowed to have the markers revised if they have spent three months living with a different expressed gender, six months for people ages 16 and 17. The current period is two years. □

Associated Press



A patient is turned away from the emergency room due to full capacity at the Baoding No. 2 Central Hospital in Zhuozhou city in northern China's Hebei province on Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The head of the World Health Organization said the agency is "very concerned" about rising reports of severe coronavirus disease across China after the country largely abandoned its "zero COVID" policy, warning that its lagging vaccination rate could result in large num-

bers of vulnerable people getting infected.

At a press briefing on Wednesday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the U.N. agency needs more information on COVID-19 severity in China, particularly regarding hospital and intensive care unit admis-

WHO "very concerned" about reports of severe COVID in China

sions, "in order to make a comprehensive risk assessment of the situation on the ground."

"WHO is very concerned over the evolving situation in China with increasing reports of severe disease," Tedros said. He added that while COVID deaths have dropped more than 90% since their global peak, there were still too many uncertainties about the virus to conclude that the pandemic is over.

Some scientists have warned that the unchecked spread of COVID-19 in China could spur the emergence of new variants, which might unravel progress made globally to contain the pandemic. "Vaccination is the

exit strategy from omicron," WHO emergencies chief Dr. Michael Ryan said.

Ryan said the explosive surge of cases in China was not exclusively due to the lifting of many of the country's restrictive policies and that it was impossible to stop transmission of omicron, the most highly infectious variant yet seen of COVID-19. He said vaccination rates among people over age 60 in China lagged behind many other countries and that the efficacy of the Chinese-made vaccines was about 50%.

"That's just not adequate protection in a population as large as China, with so many vulnerable people," Ryan said. He added that while China has dramati-

cally increased its capacity to vaccinate people in recent weeks, it's unclear whether that will be enough.

To date, China has declined to authorize Western-made messenger RNA vaccines, which have proven to be more effective than its locally made shots. Beijing did agree to allow a shipment of the BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine to be imported, for Germans living in China.

"The question remains whether or not enough vaccination can be done in the coming week or two weeks that will actually blunt the impact of the second wave and the burden on the health system," Ryan said. □

Kids Computer Coding Club, Aru CoderDojo, Receives Raspberry Pi Donation

2022 presented the gift that kept on giving for the computer coding kids of the Aru CoderDojo club thanks to the donation of Raspberry Pi computers made by Aruba Bank N.V. to the Full Stack Vision Foundation.

Aruba Bank N.V. (also known as Aruba Bank) donated ten (10) Raspberry Pi single-board computers to Full Stack Vision Foundation of which five (5) were gifted to children of the Aruban community and two (2) were given to Pius X School in Dakota for their students. The Raspberry Pi recipients who are all active Aru CoderDojo club members that have continued to showcase outstanding computer coding skills are the following: Dacian Coffy, Ruarth Lampe, Harshaan Lulla, Avastha Motyani, and Sehej Motyani. The remaining three (3) Raspberry Pi computers are being utilized during the Aru CoderDojo sessions at



both the Oranjestad and San Nicolas locations of the local library, Biblioteca Nacional Aruba.

Aru CoderDojo sessions were actively hosted on a biweekly basis at Biblio-

teca Nacional Aruba for the entire academic year of 2021/2022 where children of Aruba, ages 7 to 17 years, could attend the club for free. Full Stack Vision Foundation expresses

their deepest gratitude to Aruba Bank for the donation of the ten (10) Raspberry Pi computers. Thanks to this gift numerous children of Aruba are continuing to enhance their digital

intelligence and computer skills.

Aru CoderDojo

Aru CoderDojo marks the official membership of Aruba within the global CoderDojo community. The FREE computer coding sessions that are hosted by Aru CoderDojo are called a Dojo and the participants are called ninjas. During the Dojo, ninjas learn how to code, develop websites, apps, programs, and games, and explore technology in a fun and creative way.

Full Stack Vision Foundation

Full Stack Vision Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a focus on developing skills for future jobs in the borderless economy by making Aruba digitally intelligent. Full Stack Vision executes their vision and mission through the education of Aruba's youth and children, as well as industry professionals, with a focus on 21st century skills. □

SMFA signed new lease agreement for the ex-Botica Aruba monument

ORANJESTAD – During a press conference yesterday at the building of ex-Botica Aruba on Steenweg 19, a new agreement was signed between Stichting Monumentenfonds and Cocolishi Studios to lease the second floor of the building for a new purpose.

Mircla Nava, PR, marketing & education manager of SMFA explained that in the beginning of December the foundation was already present in Steenweg 19 to announce that the building, which recently was restored by SMFA, will see a new purpose with the restaurant KOAL opening in the beginning of 2023 in the first floor of the building.

Yesterday at the same building they signed the lease agreement with Cocolishi Studios to rent the top part of the building. "We are very pleased to announce that we reached a lease agreement with Cocolishi Studios so we can lease the top part of the building", Nava indicated.

She commented that one of the biggest challenges faced by the foundation regarding monuments is to find a purpose for these buildings. In this case, she mentioned that they have a building that is ideal, with two separate entrances, and thus they could combine



two different purposes: a production studio and a restaurant.

"What makes us very happy is that the building will also be accessible to the public in the future, seeing the functions that will be taking place in the building, namely a restaurant and production company. This way the history of ex-Botica Aruba will continue for the future generations", she commented.

The building at Steenweg 19 is a monument from 1925 built by Addison Croes, who together with Gustave Nouel began with the first pharmacy in Aruba that lasted for

50 years, namely Botica Aruba. After the pharmacy closed its doors, it became El Mercado of Palais Hindu. In 2015, Stichting Monumentenfonds Aruba bought the building. For a while it was used as an art atelier by BEAM, and then in 2020 the restoration of the façade began.

Finalizing, Nava said that the following phase after signing the lease agreement will be for SMFA together with Cocolishi Studios to work on the renovation of the interior, so that next year the official opening can take place. □



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Papillon: the butterfly effect of magnificent food



PALM BEACH — Do you remember the film “Papillon” starring Steve McQueen? Papillon restaurant is the island’s example where ‘life imitates art.’ The décor, especially the restrooms, was inspired by the movie. For more than a decade this restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

“We find it really important that our guests have fun; can relax while listening to live music while their taste buds are being tickled by France, The Netherlands and the Caribbean. We offer a unique fusion of dishes and a night not to forget,” says owner Tina. She points out that all Covid-protocol is in place here, they are very keen on hygiene and offer outside dining on a cozy, elegant terrace with social distancing in place and right on the high-rise strip.



Fresh oysters, caviar and wild boar

You are on vacation, life is to enjoy! If you want something special, a different flow than the usual then Papillon is the place to go. Foodies are in heaven here with classic French dishes such as Foie Gras, Frog Legs, fresh Oysters coming in on a weekly basis from Holland, Escargots, Dover Sole à la Meunière flown in from Europe and filleted at the table, Duck Breast seared on the skin, roasted and braised Lamb in Balashi beer and slow braised Wild Boar Shank. Do not leave without trying the exclusive recommendation: Caviar! All of this combined with an extensive wine list from around the world makes Papillon a must-do on your Aruban vacation.



Let the music play!

We will give you another reason to visit: on Monday's and Friday's the famous Marisela who enchants you with her acoustic performance accompanied by percussion only; on Thursday's and Saturday's you can enjoy the tunes of live sax player Jairo and on Sunday's and Tuesday's Jose Herrera will enchants you with his keyboard talent. The musicians interact with the guests, requests can be send in, the live tunes definitely add to the experience.

Vegetarian vibes present

Impressive vegetarian/vegan dishes are set up especially for the guests by the chef and Meredith from Vegan Aruba. “We offer vegan choices that are really good and tasty. Our daily soup is always vegan too.” What are you waiting for, make sure to pay a visit to this elegant yet laid-back restaurant while on Aruba. You are most welcome!

Papillon Restaurant is located at The Village across the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino and within walking distance of all other major hotels. □

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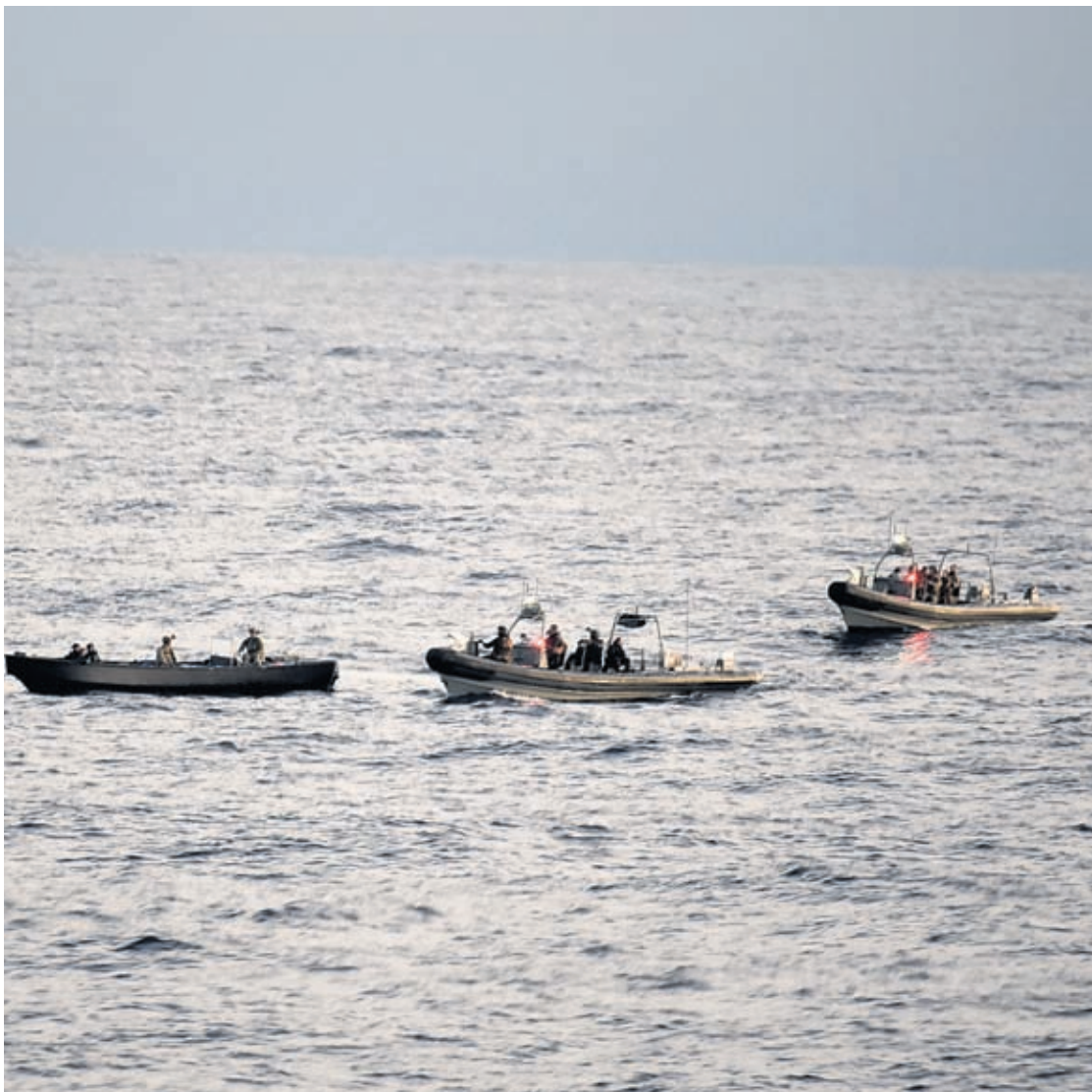
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The amount of drugs intercepted by the navy in the Caribbean Region continues to rise



The Royal Dutch Navy this year has summed up on her name a record quantity of intercepted drugs in the Dutch Caribbean Region. That happened in collaboration with international partners. Zr.Ms. Holland encountered 4 transports in recent weeks, good for almost 3,000 kilos of cocaine. This brings the total to almost 35,000 kilos of intercepted contraband in 2022.

In recent captures, a go-fast was again and again detected by the maritime patrol aircraft of the Coastguard Dutch Caribbean Region. For this a helicopter of the USA Coastguard and the rapid FRISC- powerboats were deployed. These managed to bring the drug transportations to a stop.

The suspects were arrested on the spot. They were handed over to the Ameri-

can authorities for persecution in the United States of America. The intercepted quantity of drugs in the meantime have been b=destroyed.

Navy Patrol Ship

Zr.Ms. Holland since the middle of October 2022 is the Navy Patrol Ship in the Dutch Caribbean Region. The Patrol ship during counter-drug operations works closely together with the American Coastguard

en Coastguard Caribbean Region.

Zr.Ms. Holland during the period of 2 months has already been able to intercept almost 10,000 kilograms of drugs. Zr.Ms. Friesland managed to prevent almost 4,000 kilos from reaching the market and Zr.Ms. Groningen was good for capturing a total of more than 21,000 kilograms. □

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Entire bill

Tuesday



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Wednesday



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For Directions

Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more

than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is



the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barber-shop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific

importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment. Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules

Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer. □



Dande Festival will take place on December 27-29

ORANJESTAD – Dande Festival, a cultural year-end tradition in Aruba, will take place next week. Commission for the Celebration of National Days of the Department of Culture said they are glad to be able to promote the festival this year.

The Dande is a local oral tradition where the song “ay nobe” (aña nobo) – “new year” is performed as the New Year is approaching or has arrived. Dande stems from the word Dandalia, which loosely translates into “to party, he who parties, or simply paranda”. The first sentence of the Dande song “oh dande nos a jega na bo porta” – Ay Nobe, translated means “Oh the party has arrived at your door” – New Year. The origin of the Dande is not known, however there are many theories such as; 1. It started in the district of Savaneta, 2. It started in the district of Noord, 3. Its popularity strengthened in the district of St. Cruz, or 4. It started after the abolition of slavery in 1863 by the Dutch King.

A group of five or sometimes even six people (one singer accompanied by numerous musicians) usually performs the most known Aruban end of the year tradition. These people, usually family members accompany a singer and travel door-to-door to express their best wishes for the New Year in repetitive phrases (blessings), with a chorus that includes the phrase “ay nobe” (aña nobo) – “new year” – sung after each blessing. Currently, the celebratory travel usually leads to the houses of the singers’ friends and family, where the singer collects money in his hat to give to the group. To read more, please visit <https://www.arubatoday.com/culture-for-christmas>.

This year, the festival will take place on December 27-29. The Commission informed that for the first time, UNOCA will be part of this celebration together



with the Commission in order to elevate the festival of Dande. Lyonel Dirks said that after they sat together with all three organizers, being Chico Harms Foundation, Children and Youth Festival Commission, and Big Adult Festival – which are celebrating 50 years of their festival – they reached the conclusion to put all these festivals together, but on different dates; this to give the Aruban community time to celebrate each festival with its different concept while remaining within the Dande tradition. On the 27th the festival will be at the Centro di Bario Brazil organized by the Chico Harms Foundation. Chico Harms, who was present at the press conference, mentioned he is very happy that this year UNOCA and the Commission for the Celebration of National Days came together to make these activities as big as possible.

Regarding their show, Harms said that because of the Covid-19 pandemic, this is the 53rd edition of

the festival. They began at Colegio Cristo Rey and after the opening of sede di bario Brazil, they moved there. This year there will be 17 groups taking part. “We have to also do it for children in Tanki Leendert and we have to see how we’re going to do it next year. We cannot let this slip at any moment, this is ours and we must carry on”, Harms said. The festival at Centro di

Bario Brazil will begin at 6:30 seeing as 17 is a large amount of groups. They expect to finish around 12-1am.

Aaron Arenas of the Commission to Promote Culture said that on the 28th of December the festival will take place at the Centro di Bario Tanki Leendert for children and youth. There will be a total of 20 participants in

the categories of 4-6 years, 7-9 years, 10-12 years and 13 to 17 years old. Each category will crown a king or queen. This will be the fourth winner, and each category will have either two or three places. The youth festival will begin at 7pm with 7 groups, and they expect it will finish around 11pm-12am.

Finally on the 29th of December the festival for adults will take place, celebrating 50 years in Club Caquetio. This will begin at 6:30am.

Director of UNOCA, Rayanne Hernandez said that this year they decided to partner with the Commission for the Celebration of National Days, Department of Culture and Ministry of Culture so that together they can elevate the Dande festivals in Aruba. The idea behind this is for each of the three festivals can receive more support than they usually do. “We realized that each year it becomes a challenge for each organization to keep on their own standard at the level expected by the Aruban community regarding show and presentation, but also regarding organization and logistics. This was a very important reason for us to support these festivals, to maintain the level and to continue maintaining our Dande tradition,” Hernandez said. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 43 Banks of
 - 1 Rosary
 - unit
 - 5 Makes do
 - 10 Tribal
 - leader
 - 12 Wise
 - words
 - 13 Singly
 - 14 Burn
 - a bit
 - 15 Knight's
 - address
 - 16 Unthrifty
 - sort
 - 18 Sore to
 - the touch
 - 20 Lyric
 - poem
 - 21 Adam's
 - grandson
 - 23 Curtain
 - holder
 - 24 Ludicrous
 - 26 Verve
 - 28 Wallet bill
 - 29 Be thrifty
 - 31 Drama
 - division
 - 32 Basis
 - of some
 - discrimi-
 - nation
 - 36 Kitchen
 - device
 - 39 Outback
 - bird
 - 40 Roofed
 - patio
 - 41 Improvise
 - on stage

W	I	N	T	E	R		B	I	A	S
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O	A	F		P	A	R		O	R	E
I	C	E	L	A	N	D		R	E	D
C	E	R	E	S			A	S	K	S
			I	N	M	A	T	E		
T	A	O	S		N	O	S	A	P	
A	C	R	E		T	R	O	U	P	E
M	E	S		S	E	P	T	E	T	

Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
- 1 Monster
 - 2 Carl's wife
 - in "Up"
 - 3 Decorate
 - 4 Cub's
 - cave
 - 5 Job for
 - a lawyer
 - 6 Norse god
 - 7 Famed
 - box
 - 8 Incited
 - 9 Be furious
 - 11 Bristles at
 - 17 Debate
 - side
 - 19 Dict.
 - entry
 - 22 Quite
 - a few
 - 24 Affirm
 - 25 Dish,
 - perhaps
 - 27 Cariou
 - of "Blue
 - Bloods"
 - 28 Restau-
 - rant
 - fixtures
 - 30 Historic
 - time
 - 33 River
 - feature
 - 34 Gives off
 - 35 Yokels
 - 37 Finger
 - feature
 - 38 Conks out
 - 42 River
 - stopper

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16	17				
18			19				20		
			21		22		23		
	24	25			26	27			
28				29	30				
31					32		33	34	35
36			37	38			39		
40					41	42			
43					44				
45						46			

12-22

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-22

CRYPTOQUOTE

EBYVYRKK BK ABER KYFM. BS

TRZHSBXRK RWRPUSDBYQ BS

JFWRPK. — EZDABA QBTPZY

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A HOLIDAY THAT ISN'T ALL ABOUT HOW MUCH MONEY YOU SPEND. — HILARIE BURTON



Rome DeGuzman sits on the floor of a terminal next to his two sons after missing a morning flight to Hawaii as travelers wait in line outside the building to check in at the Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, Monday, Dec. 19, 2022.

Associated Press

Storm adds uncertainty to strong holiday travel demand

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Business Writer

Concerns about illness or inflation aren't stopping Americans from hitting the roads and airports this holiday season. But a massive winter storm might.

Forecasters predict an onslaught of heavy snow, ice, flooding and powerful winds from Thursday to Saturday in a broad swath of the country, from the Plains and Midwest to the East Coast. A surge of Arctic air will follow. The Christmas weekend could be the coldest in decades.

The blast of frigid weather began hammering the Pacific Northwest Tuesday morning, and is expected to move to the northern Rockies, then grip the Plains in a deep-freeze and blanket the Midwest with heavy snowfall, forecasters say. By Friday, the arctic front is forecast to spread bone-chilling cold as far south as Florida.

Authorities across the country are worried about the potential for power outages and warned people to take precautions to protect the elderly, the homeless and livestock and, if possible, to postpone travel.

"The National Weather Service has a large area across the country which has wind chill warnings or wind chill watches," said Bob Oravec, lead forecaster for the National Weather Service in College Park, Maryland. "The system is so large and so encompassing in the U.S., there's actually about 190 million people currently under some type of winter weather advisory."

The northern-most regions of the U.S. could see wind chills approaching 70 degrees below zero (minus 57 Celsius) cold enough to leave exposed skin frostbitten in a matter of minutes. The heaviest snow is expected in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, according to the National Weather Service, and frigid wind will be fierce across the country's mid-section. □

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Sarah Polley's 'Women Talking' is a revelation

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
AP Film Writer

What happens when your home no longer feels like a home? When the rules of your life no longer make sense? When your body is not your own? When your children are not safe and neither are you? Do you look for justice? Revenge? Apologies? Do you make amends to keep the peace? Or do you search for something else? Something unknown, something new?

For a crime as old as sexual assault, we still struggle to find the language to talk about it. No matter how enlightened we're supposed to have become about these things, there is so much silence, so much shame, so much anger that just hangs in the air. Isn't it kind of sad, in a way, that the only words we've collectively agreed upon are "me too?"

Sarah Polley knows the terrible truth about sexual assault and the criminal and civil justice system: That there are no perfect victims. In her book "Run Towards the Danger" she writes about how she watched it unravel from the sidelines, in horrified silence at the advice of friends and lawyers, as a man she



This image released by United Artists shows Rooney Mara, from left, Claire Foy, Judith Ivey, Sheila McCarthy, Michelle McLeod and Jessie Buckley in a scene from "Women Talking."

Associated Press

alleges assaulted her when she was 16, was found not guilty. The other women who claimed assaults publicly were deemed unreliable narrators, their memories imperfect.

And so, for her extraordinary film "Women Talking" she approaches this societal, cultural conundrum from a different angle and in doing so makes the conversation undeniable. The women in her film have no memory of the assaults at all. What they do have are

bruises, blood and babies and a trauma so deep, so intractable that they no longer feel like themselves. This isn't helped by their faith, and the elders in their isolated religious colony who tell them that it was ghosts or Satan who did it, that they're lying to get attention, or that it was an act of wild female imagination.

But the film begins with an indisputable reality: One of the attackers is caught and this has led to a series of

events in which three generations of women have 24 hours to decide what to do before they return, demanding forgiveness. Their three options as they see it are 1) do nothing, 2) stay and fight, or 3) leave. So, they talk.

The film is an adaptation of a 2018 book by Miriam Toews, which was itself inspired by a real story out of a Mennonite community in Bolivia in which eight men were convicted of raping more than 100 women

and girls. They used cow tranquilizers on their victims who had little to no memory of the incidents.

Polley's version is expressionistic and lyrical, biting and poetic. The conversations are messy, the feminism contradictory and the trauma complicated. Among the grandmothers (Frances McDormand, Sheila McCarthy, Judith Ivey) there are those who have lived with these unspoken truths for so long that abandoning the end goal, the kingdom of heaven, is simply not an option. There are some who are open to a conversation and see a light. One tells allegorical stories about her horses Ruth and Cheryl.

The younger mothers are different too. Jessie Buckley's Mariche is full of bitterness and nowhere to channel it.

Claire Foy's Salome is bubbling over with rage. Her four-year-old was assaulted and she wants to kill. Rooney Mara's Ona, newly pregnant from an assault, is serious but romantic, looking at things as a poet might, from a kind of ivory tower she's constructed for herself, despite the fact that none of the women have been taught to read. □

'Get Carter,' 'Flash Gordon' director Mike Hodges dies at 90

By **JILL LAWLESS**
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British filmmaker Mike Hodges, who directed gangland thriller "Get Carter" and sci-fi cult classic "Flash Gordon," has died. He was 90.

Hodges died at his home in the county of Dorset in southwest England on Saturday, his friend and former producer Mike Kaplan told British media on Wednesday. No cause of death was given.

Born in the English port city of Bristol in 1932, Hodges trained as an accountant and did two years of compulsory military ser-

vice aboard a Royal Navy minesweeper, visiting poor coastal communities around England.

"For two years, my middle-class eyes were forced to witness horrendous poverty and deprivation that I was previously unaware of," he wrote in a letter to The Guardian earlier this year. The experience influenced his feature debut, 1971 thriller "Get Carter," which he wrote and directed. It starred Michael Caine as a gangster who returns to his home city of Newcastle on the trail of his brother's killers. Remembered for its unflinching violence, vividly

gritty northeast England locations and jazz score, it's considered a British classic. Caine also starred in Hodges' 1972 crime comedy "Pulp." Hodges went on to direct 1974 sci-fi thriller "The Terminal Man," starring George Segal as a scientist who turns violent after electrodes are implanted in his brain. "Flash Gordon," made amid the science fiction deluge unleashed by the success of "Star Wars," was released in 1980. A campy romp inspired by 1930s adventure comics, pop music videos and expressionist cinema, it was a hit in Britain and gained an

international cult following. Hodges' 1985 sci-fi comedy "Morons from Outer Space" was less successful. His 1980s films also included "A Prayer for the Dying," starring Mickey Rourke as a former IRA militant, and "Black Rainbow" with Rosanna Arquette as a psychic medium targeted by a killer.

Hodges had a late-career success with 1998 drama "Croupier," which gave Clive Owen his international breakout role as a dealer in a London casino. The film initially flopped in the U.K. but got rave reviews in the U.S. and became a hit. □



British filmmaker Mike Hodges is pictured in London on April 26, 2004. Hodges, who directed gangland thriller "Get Carter" and sci-fi cult classic "Flash Gordon," died at the age of 90, his friend his friend Mike Kaplan told British media on Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

Franco Harris, Steeler who caught Immaculate Reception, dies

By WILL GRAVES

AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Franco Harris, the Hall of Fame running back whose heads-up thinking authored the “Immaculate Reception,” considered the most iconic play in NFL history, has died. He was 72.

Harris’ son, Dok, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his father died overnight. No cause of death was given.

His death comes two days before the 50th anniversary of the play that provided the jolt that helped transform the Steelers from also-rans into the NFL’s elite and three days before Pittsburgh is scheduled to retire his No. 32 during a ceremony at halftime of its game against the Las Vegas Raiders. Harris had been busy in the run-up to the celebration, doing media interviews on Monday to talk about a moment to which he is forever linked.

“It is difficult to find the appropriate words to describe Franco Harris’ impact on the Pittsburgh Steelers, his teammates, the City of Pittsburgh and Steelers Nation,” team President Art Rooney II said in a statement. “From his rookie season, which included the Immaculate Reception, through the next 50 years, Franco brought joy to people on and off the field. He never stopped giving



Pittsburgh Steelers’ Franco Harris (32) eludes a tackle by Oakland Raiders’ Jimmy Warren as he runs 42-yards for a touchdown after catching a deflected pass during an AFC Divisional NFL football playoff game in Pittsburgh on Dec. 23, 1972.

back in so many ways. He touched so many, and he was loved by so many.”

Harris ran for 12,120 yards and won four Super Bowl rings with the Pittsburgh Steelers in the 1970s, a dynasty that began in earnest when Harris decided to keep running during a last-second heave by Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw in a playoff game against Oakland in 1972.

With Pittsburgh trailing 7-6 and facing fourth-and-10 from its own 40-yard line and 22 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, Bradshaw drifted back and threw deep to running

back Frenchy Fuqua.

Fuqua and Oakland defensive back Jack Tatum collided, sending the ball careening back toward midfield in the direction of Harris. Game officials weren’t sure who deflected the pass; replays were inconclusive.

While nearly everyone else on the field stopped, Harris kept his legs churning, snatching the ball just inches above the Three Rivers Stadium turf near the Oakland 45, then outracing several stunned Raider defenders to give the Steelers their first playoff victory in the franchise’s four-de-

cade history. “That play really represents our teams of the ‘70s,” Harris said after the “Immaculate Reception” was voted the greatest play in NFL history during the league’s 100th anniversary season in 2020.

Though the Raiders cried foul in the moment, over time they somewhat embraced their role in NFL lore. Oakland linebacker Phil Villapiano, who was covering Harris on the play, even attended a 40th-anniversary celebration of the play in 2012, when a small monument commemorating the exact location of Harris’ history-altering catch was un-

veiled. Villapiano still plans to attend Saturday night’s jersey retirement ceremony for his former rival-turned-friend, and is just fine with the mystery that still surrounds what actually happened at 3:29 p.m. on Dec. 23, 1972.

“There’s so many angles and so many things. Nobody will ever figure that out,” Villapiano said. “Let’s let it go on forever.”

While the Steelers fell the next week to Miami in the AFC championship, Pittsburgh was on its way to becoming the dominant team of the 1970s, twice winning back-to-back Super Bowls, first after the 1974 and 1975 seasons and again after the 1978 and 1979 seasons. And it all began with a play that shifted the fortunes of a franchise and, in some ways, a region.

Harris, the 6-foot-2, 230-pound workhorse from Penn State, found himself in the center of it all. He churned for a then-record 158 yards rushing and a touchdown in Pittsburgh’s 16-6 victory over Minnesota in Super Bowl IX on his way to winning the game’s Most Valuable Player award. He scored at least once in three of the four Super Bowls he played in, and his 354 career yards rushing on the NFL’s biggest stage remains a record nearly four decades after his retirement. □

Associated Press

Russian hurdler stripped of 2012 Olympics gold for doping

MONACO (AP) — Russian 400-meter hurdler Natalya Antyukh will lose her gold medal from the 2012 London Games due to doping, putting American Lashinda Demus in position to be named the champion more than a decade after the race.

The Athletics Integrity Unit, which oversees doping cases in track and field, announced Wednesday that Antyukh had not appealed a penalty handed down two months ago that included the stripping of her results from July 2012 through June 2013. The AIU said the IOC could now

“proceed with the reallocation of medals and the update of the IOC database.”

Zuzana Hejnová of the Czech Republic and Kalliese Spencer of Jamaica are in line to receive silver and bronze.

AIU said Antyukh, who had already been serving a four-year ban, received the added sanction of having the 2012 results stripped because of evidence that came from a database kept at the Moscow antidoping laboratory. Though AIU offered no specifics, data from that lab was used to corroborate find-

ings in a number of cases that came out of Russia’s state-sponsored doping scandal.

At the London Games, Antyukh finished in 52.70 seconds, lowering her personal best by .22 to beat Demus by .07. Demus, who also won world championships in 2011, stopped competing in 2016.

In an email exchange with NBC Sports when the initial decision was released, Demus said “I’m not afraid to say that I then deserve the official title, medal, recognition, and missed compensation that goes along with it all.” □



Russia’s Natalya Antyukh, right, powers ahead of United States’ Lashinda Demus to win gold in the women’s 400-meter hurdles final during the athletics in the Olympic Stadium at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012.

Associated Press

Judge appointed Yankees captain after reaching longterm deal

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Aaron Judge stood for photo after photo as if at a wedding. And in a way it was: He had gotten hitched to the New York Yankees for the rest of his baseball life. Judge posed with his wife, parents, Yankees management, agents and even Derek Jeter and Willie Randolph, and discussed his \$360 million, nine-year contract and owner Hal Steinbrenner's decision to appoint him the team's 16th captain the first since Jeter retired.

"It's family. The fans are family," Judge said, thinking about joining Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Jeter and Mariano



New York Yankees' captain Aaron Judge, center, poses for a picture with former Yankees captains Derek Jeter, right, and Willie Randolph during a news conference at Yankee Stadium, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

Rivera as Yankees lifers. "Just getting this chance to build this relationship with everybody, that's what I'm all about."

Judge was at his parents' home in California when the deal fell into place early Dec. 7. With San Francisco and San Diego also pursuing Judge, Steinbrenner interrupted a vacation, pulling over on a highway between Milan and the French border to speak with Judge at about 3 a.m. PST.

"He shot me a message earlier about, 'What's the holdup? What's it going to take to get this to the finish line?' So we hopped on a quick call," Judge said.

Steinbrenner increased New York's offer from an eight-year deal to a nine-year agreement.

Just before Opening Day, Judge had turned down the Yankees' offer of \$213.5 million over seven years through 2029. Steinbrenner called Judge on Oct. 24 the day after Houston eliminated the Yankees to jumpstart talks, and invited the outfielder to his home in Tampa, Florida.

"One of the conversations we had two weeks ago, I actually said to him, 'As far as I'm concerned, you are not a free agent, you are a Yankee, and we need to do everything we can to ensure that remains the same,'" Steinbrenner said. Judge had not been aware of rumors that he was headed to the Giants: "I was actually on a plane, so I really kind of missed all the stuff going on about where I would go."

Judge, the reigning American League MVP after setting an AL record with 62 homers. gets \$40 million annually, a full no-trade provision and a hotel suite on road trips.

"I get a chance to continue something the Yankees are so big on, which is legacy," Judge said. "I get a chance to continue my legacy here in pinstripes, the best city in the world, the best baseball city, in front of the best fans." □

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